

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PANAMA 06705 281350Z

42

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P 281315Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9232

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 6705

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: SUGGESTED BRIEFING POINTS FOR THE SECRETARY

1. THIS GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT BY IRRITATING THE UNITED STATES, IT CAN INDUCE US TO MAKE PROGRESS AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. I HAVE LITTLE CONFIDENCE THAT BOYD -- AND, ABOVE ALL, TORRIJOS -- KNOW HOW MUCH IRRITATION WE CAN TAKE BEFORE WE ARE FORCED TO REACT IN WAYS THEY WILL NOT LIKE.

2. I BELIEVE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE SECRETARY TO IMPRESS ON FOREIGN MINISTER BOYD THE POTENTIALLY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES WHICH IRRESPONSIBLE CHARGES BY THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT MAY HAVE ON THE NEGOTIATIONS. SUCH CHARGES MAY BECOME EVEN MORE IRRESPONSIBLE UNLESS IT IS MADE CLEAR THAT THEY DIMINISH THE PROSPECTS FOR A TREATY. I THEREFORE SUGGEST THAT TALKING POINTS ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES BE INCLUDED IN THE BRIEFING PAPER FOR THE SECRETARY'S BILATERAL WITH BOYD:

-- I WAS SHOCKED AND DISMAYED TO READ THE COMPLETELY FALSE CHARGES MADE BY YOU AND BY THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT'S INFORMATION OFFICE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WAS INTERFERING IN PANAMA'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS.

-- YOU CAN IMAGINE PRESIDENT FORD'S REACTION WHEN
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HE HEARD THAT THE WASHINGTON POST HAD QUOTED THE FOREIGN

MINISTER OF PANAMA AS SUGGESTING THAT THE PRESIDENT
MIGHT HAVE STALLED NEGOTIATIONS IN THE BELIEF THAT AN
EXPLOSIVE INCIDENT WOULD WORK TO HIS POLITICAL ADVANTAGE.

-- WHILE I UNDERSTAND THE DIFFICULTIES PANAMA IS
FACING, THE ADMINISTRATION HAS ITS OWN POLITICAL
CONCERNS -- OF WHICH YOU, FROM YOUR LONG YEARS OF
RESIDENCE IN THE U.S., MUST BE FULLY AWARE.

-- THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT'S OUTBURST HAS BEEN
EXTREMELY UNHELPFUL. NEVERTHELESS WE ARE DETERMINED TO
GO AHEAD WITH NEGOTIATIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE, PROVIDED
OF COURSE THAT THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT SHOW
BY FURTHER ILL-CONSIDERED ACTIONS THAT IT IS NO LONGER
INTERESTED IN NEGOTIATING.

JORDEN

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